BOME NEW BOOKS Among the Mabdists

In a large octavo volume of 630 pages, entitled

Fire and Sword in the Sudan, by Rupotr C. SLATIN Pasha (Edward Arnold), we have an autobiographical account of the sixteen years pent by the author in the Sudan, durin twelve of which he was a captive of the Mahd and of the latter's successor, Khalifa Abdullahi. Considered merely as a record of personal adventure and suffering, the narrative is one of thrilling interest, but it is also of great histor ical value, affording, as it does, the sole authen tic and tolerably exhaustive description of the rise and course of the remarkable religious movement, which still dominates large section of northeastern Africa. As Governor-General Darfur, the author was in a position to understand and explain the ethnological, social, and political conditions which made the triumph of the Mahdi possible, and during his long captivity at Omdurinan he was an eyewitness of the ruin which the revolution brought on the greater part of the native population Through long and intimate contact with the Mahdi nimself, and with the inheritor of his power, the Khalifa Abdul ah!, he has been en-abled to give us a more intelligible and minute account of their personal characteristics, their religious aims, and their neturals of government than has hitherto been accessible to the Western world. We add that the English translation is by Major F. R. Wingate of the Egyptian army, and that to the present volume is prefixed an introductory note by Father Ohrwalder, who for ten years was a fellow captive

of Slatin Pasha's in the Matelist came. Rudolf Slatin is an Aestr on by birth, and in July, 1878, was serving as a Licutemant in the Crown Prince Rudolph's regiment on the Bosnian frontier when he received a letter from Gen, Gordon inviting him to come to the Sudan and take service with the Egyptian Government under his direction. To account for this invita-1874, Slatin had undertaken a journey to the Sudan, reaching Khartum in October of that year. There he made the acquaintance of Emin Pasha (then Dr. Emin , who had recently arrived from Egypt. Gen. Gordon, who at that time was residing at Lado as Governor-General of the equatorial provinces, invited Emin and Slatin to visit him, but the latter was unable to go, being obliged to complete his military service at home during the following year. Before leaving Khartum, however, he begged Emin to recommend him to Gen. Gordon, which was done; and this recommendation eventually resulted in Slatin's receiving, some three years later, the letter to which we have referred. longed, he tells us, to return to the Sudan in some official capacity, but it was not till Decamber, 1878, that he received permission, as an officer of the reserves, to set out once more for Africa. He arrived at Khartum on Jan 15, 1879, and was successively appointed by Gordon, Financial Inspector, Mudir of Dara, and ultimately, Governor-General of Darfur. The greater part of the first nine chapters of the book are devoted to the author's experiences in Darfur and to his energetic, but eventually fruitless attempts to stem the tide of Mahdism which starting in Kordofan, had swept west ward over the first-named province. We pas over the record of this unavailing struggle merely noting that, toward the end, Slati finding that his defeats were ascribed by his officers and men to the fact that he was a Christian, decided to nominally adopt the Mohammedan religion. The decision undoubtedly saved his life when he was forced to surrender at Dara, not long before the slege of Khartum.

The features of this volume to which we shall confine ourselves are the author's comments on the expedition of Hicks Pasha and on the fall of Khartum, and the descriptions of the Mahdi and of the Khalifa Abdullahi, both of whom he knew, especially the latter, in whose bodyguard he remained for almost a dozen years, until the long-rherished but often disap-

pointed hope of escape was gratified. ٠. Slatin Pasha is of the opinion that the whole situation in the Sudan might have been changed if in the winter of 1882-83, the authorities at Cairo had accepted the good advice which they received, not to despatch a large expedition with the aim of reconquering Kordofan, but to station re-enforcements from Egypt in strons defensive positions along the White Nile, and to leave, for the time being, the rebels to themselves. In the author's judgment, the military forces at the disposal of the loval officers were quite sufficient to stamp out the revolt in the o-called Gezira, or island between the Blue and White Nile, and to check the advance of the Mahdists from the west. Had this plan been adopted, it is pronounced more than probable that the complete absence of any regular system of administration among the rebels would have soon caused an out break of discord; and, at a later period, the Egyptian Government would have been able to ver the ground it had lost. Not that the Khedive's authority could have been maintained in Darfur until better times, but to have delib erately renounced that province would have been the less of two evils. Those at the head of affairs in Cairo, however, thought otherwise The edict went forth that the prestige of the Egyptian Government was to be restored at all osts, and this, it was assumed, could be effected by an army under the English General, Hicks, assisted by other European officers. The plan was speedily made known to the Mahdi, and among the measures which he took to thwart it was to despatch Osman Digna, previously a slave dealer in Suakin, to raise the Jehad, or Holy War, in the neighborhood of his own town. As events were to prove, the Mahdi showed much astuteness in selecting this man, and he rightly judged that a revolt in the Sudan would seriously embarrass the Khartum Government and delay, if it did not stop altogether, the expedition intended for Kordo fac. The details of the various encounters be tween Osman Digna and the Government troops are so well known that they receive only a passing reference in this book, the author merely observing that the Mahdist operation in the eastern districts, although successful, did not have the effect of causing the Cairo Government to renounce its intention in regard to the Rordofan expedition. So it came to in September, 1883, the ill-fated Hicks left Khartam, or rather Duem on the White Nile, whence he proceeded to advance against El Obeld the capital of Kordofan. It is well known that reaching Kashgeil, some thirty miles southeast of El Obeld, Gen, Hicks and his ter thousand followers were, on Nov. 4. attacked by at least a hundred thousand wild fanatics that, with the exception of two or three hundred who hid themselves under the dear bodies, the entire force was annihilated. With ill-suppressed indignation, Slatin Pasha observes that the situation in Kordofan must have en strangely misunderstood if the Cairo an thorities imagined that, by the despatch of this expedition, they would succeed in overthrowing the Mahdi, who had made himself the supreme ruler of extensive western districts, in which every man had become his devoted adherent. Did they not realize, he asks, that the Mahdists were in possession of a far larger number of rifles than were at the disposal of Hicks's force of 10,000 men, and that these rifles were now in the uands of elephant and ostrich hunters who thoroughly understood how to use them? Were they not aware, moreover, that there were enrolled under the Mahdi's banners thousands of regulars who had been formerly in the Government service, or did they imagine that these men, when the chance came, would desert the rebels and join Hicks? Surely there must have been, says Slatin, among the Govern ment advisers some possessing sufficient knowledge of the Sudan to comprehend how applicable to the situation was the negro proverb: " He

who marries my mother is my father." The

Mahdi had conquered the country, and had thus metaphorically married the mother of

its inhabitants; him, therefore, they had fully

accepted as their lord and master. Another

the fact that the troops sent against the Mahdi

were composed mostly of the disbanded rabble

of Arabi Pasha's army, which had just been

doubt that Gen. Hicks himself fully understood

efeated by the British. Our author has no

which attention is directed is

matters; for, replying to a question put to him by one of his friends at Duen, as to what he hought of the situation, he replied quietly, "I am like Jesus Christ in the midst of the Jews," haps thinking that, if he refused to advance, his nonor might be impugned.

HE.

We pass to the slege and fall of Khartum which is discussed in the tenth chapter of this volume. The Egyptian Government, acting herein in accord with the British Governmen imagined that, by the despatch of Gordon, who undoubtedly possessed special knowledge of the Sudan, the Mahdist agitation would be checked. As Slatin Pasha points out, however, neither these Governments nor Gordon himsel seemed to understand how serious the situatio really was. Did they suppose, the author asks that Gordon, who had had occasion to show considerable personal bravery, who had gained a name for charity and benevolence among the lower classes of the Darfur population, and who had suppressed a number of revolts in the equatorial negro lands, was capable of putting out the flames of which, among the Arabs, had been fanned by one success after another into an irresistib blaze? Even the Jaalin Arabs between Berber and Khartum and throughout the so-calle Gezira, or "island," between the Blue and White Nile, had become restless and dissatisfied. As matter of fact these very tribes had every rea son to remember, with little satisfaction name of the Governor-General who had issued an ejection edict against the Gellabas or Nile traders of the southern districts, during an earlier war against the Arabs. In the event which followed this drastic measure many of these Jaslin and lost fathers, brothers, and son and had been reduced to beggary; were the likely to forgive Gordon this? Neverth less, on Feb. 18, 1884, Gordon reached Khartum and received a warm welcom from the officials and inhabitants. We are told that those who came in immediate contact with him and who auticipated for themselves much personal benefit, were convinced that the Egyp tian and British Governments would neve leave a man like Gordon in the lurch. Almohis first step, however, was one which Slatin Pasha regards as a great mistake, namely, to issue a proclamation permitting the slave trade conferring on the Mahdi the appointment o Sultan of Kordefan, and proposing to enter into relations with him. In a letter bestowing this appointment, he also asked for the release o the prisoners that had been taken, and informe the Mahdi that some fine clothes had been sent to him as a present. Slatin Pasha thinks that Gordon's letter would have been all very well had he had a force at his back wit which to march into Kordofan; but the Mahd was aware that he had arrived at Khartun with merely a small body guard. Naturally the Mahdi thought it an extraordinary pro ceeding for Gordon to offer him what he had

already taken by force of arms, and what it was

most improbable any troops at Gordon's dis-

posal could have wrenched from him. It was,

therefore, in a contemptuous frame of mind

that the Mahdi replied, advising Gordon to sur

This was not the only mistake made by Gor

don. The mere fact that he had come to Khar-

tum without a force at his back proved to the

Jaalin and other Arab tribes occupying the

banks of the Nile that he depended on his per

sonal influence to carry out his task; but, to

those who understood the situation, it was creat

render and save his life.

that personal influence, at the stage of affairs then reached, would be quite powerless. What then, the author asks, could have induced him to publish the fatal notice proclaiming far and wide that the Khedive's Government intended to abandon the Sudan? On the advice of Hussein Pasha, an Egyptian officer, he had refrained from reading it at Berber, but at Metempeh he had proclaimed it before all the people. Must we nfer that Gordon had never been informed of the Mahdi's proclamations, sent to all the tribes after the fall of El Obeid? Was he not aware that these proclamations enjoined all the people of the Sudan to unite in a religious war against Egyptian authority, and warned all those who disobayed the summons, or sh found giving assistance to the Turk, that they would be adjudged guilty of betraying the State, and, as such traitors, would lose their money and property, while their wives and children would become the slaves of the Mahdi and his followers. Gordon's idea was to obtain the assistance of the river tribes, in order to facilitate the withdrawal of the Egyptian garrison; but how could be expect them to help him when, in the words of his fatal proclamation, it was decreed that they were to be abandoned to their fate? How could they, once deserted by the garrisons, oppose the Mahdi, his 40,000 rifles, and his hosts of wild s panting for blood and river tribes were quite sensible enough to perceive that the furtherance of Gordon's retreat would mean annihilation for themselves and enslavement for their families. Why should they commit this act of self-sacrifice? How could Gordon's personal influence avail agains the personal interests of every man, woman and child in the Sudan, which, as he are nounced, would be abandoned? Slatin l'asha's conclusion is that, if for political or other reasons it was impossible for the Cairo Government to retain a hold on the Sudan, or to reconquer it by degrees, it was useless to send Gordon thither. It did not require, he says, a person of any special military capacity to remove the garrisons and material of war by steamers to Berber, under pretext of relieving that town. Thus the whole or a considerable portion of the soldiers stationed in the Sudan might have been successfully withdrawn, though it would have been necessary to do this without delay, and it would not have been feasible after the fall of Berber. Berber, however t must be remembered, did not fall until the 19th of May, three months after Gordon's arrival in Khartum. Under any circumstances. the reading of the mischievous proclamation just referred to precipitated matters to an alarming extent. The intention of the Egyptian Gov. rnment was disclosed to the Sudanese, and they, naturally, from that moment, looked to their own immediate interests, which were now directly opposed to those of the Government, so hopelessly overthrown by their victorious com-patriot, the Mahdi. The inhabitants of Khartum themselves began to look with mistrust on Gordon; for they understood from the proclamation, of which they had heard, that he had only come to withdraw the garrison, though later on, they thoroughly understood that Gordon himself had come to conquer with them or to die.

As a captive Slatin accompanied the Mabdi to Khartum and witnessed the closing opera tions of the siege, until the discovery and interpretation of a letter which he had written to Gordon caused him to be put in chains. Two large iron rings bound together by a thick iron bar were slipped over his feet and then hammered close; an iron ring was placed around his neck, and to this was attached a long fron chain with the links so arranged that he had the greatest difficulty in moving his head. Not long afterward, on his refusal to work one of the Mahdi's guns on the ground that he know nothing about artillery, another set of iro rings and a bar were forged on to his ankle; but as the weight he 'already bore pro vented him from standing upright, and he was obliged to remain lying down day and night, an iron more or less did not make much difference. Such was the plight of Slatin Pasha on the morning of Jan. 26, 1885. when his guards came to him, excitedly relating how Khartum had been taken by storm and was now in the hands of the Mahdists. Chained as he was, the captive managed to crawl out o his tent, to which a great crowd was approach ing from the quarters of the Mahdi and the Khalifa. In front of the crowd marched three black soldiers, one of whom carried in his hands a bloody cloth in which something was wrapped up. Coming close to Slatin, he undid the cloth and showed him the head of Gen. Gordon "The blood rushed to my head," the author says, "and my heart seemed to stop beating But, with a tremendous effort at self-contro

I gazed silently upon the ghastly specta-

cle. Gordon's blue eyes were half opened; the

nouth was perfectly natural; the hair of his need and his short whiskers were almost white." "Is not this the head of your uncle, the unbeliever?" asked the soldier, holding up the head. "What of it?" returned Slatin qui-etly: "a brave soldier, who fell at his post happy is he to have fallen; his sufferings are over." The author tells us that he re-entered his tent broken hearted. "Of what use was the English army now? How fatal had been the delay at Metemneh!" The English advanced guard had reached Gubat on the Nile on Jan. 20 at 10 A. M.; on the 21st four steamers despatched by Gordon had arrived. Why, then, were not some Englishmen put on board, no matter how lew, and despatched instantly to Khartum? Could they only have been seen in the town, the garrison would have taken fresh hope, and would have fought tooth and nail against the enemy, while the inhabitants, who had lost all faith in Gordon's promises, would have joined heartily in resisting the attack of the dervishes, knowing that the relief expedition was now certain to reach them. Gordo on his part, had done his utmost to hold the town. He had appounced that an English army was coming; he had made a paper currency; he had distributed decorations and honors almos daily, in order to keep up the bearts of the garrison: and, as the position had become more desperate, he had made almost superhuman efforts to induce the troops to make a stand. But despair had taken possession of them. What was the use of all their decorations now; of what good were all their ranks and honors? As for the paper money, perhaps there were still one or two san guine persons who would buy a pound note for a few pennies, on the chance that, by some stroke of luck, the Government might yet b victorious; but gradually even these slender hopes expired. Gordon's promises were no longer credited, whereas if but a single steamer with a few English officers on board had reached the town to bring the news that they had won a victory and were on the Nile, the troops and inhabitants would have doubted no longer; they would have been convinced that

The actual death scepe was thus recounted to the captive Slatin by evenitnesses. Once the line of the White Nile was crossed, the great mass of the enemy rushed toward the town To the palace! To the church! was the cry; for it was there they expected to find the treasure and Gordon, who so long had defended the city against them, and who, up to that day, had defied their efforts. The palace servants, who lived in the basement, were instantly mas sacred; and Gordon himself, standing on the top of the steps leading to the divan, awaited the approach of the Arabs. Taking no notice of his question, "Where is your master, the Mahdi?" the first man up the steps plunged his huge spear into Gordon's body; the latter fell forward on his face without uttering a word. His murderers dragged him down the steps to the palace entrance; here his head was cut off and at once sent over to the Mahdi at Omdurman, while his body was left at the mercy of the wild fanatics. We are told that thousands of the inhuman creatures pressed forward merely to stain their swords and spear with his blood; soon all that remained was a heap of mangled flesh. For a long time stain of blood marked the spot where the atrocity took place, and the steps from top to bottom bore for weeks the same sad traces until they were at last washed off, when the Khalife decided to make the palace an abode for his former and his future wives. When Gordon's head was brought to the Mahdi, he is said to have remarked that he would have been better pleased had they taken him alive; for it was, he professed, his intention to convert him, and then hand him over to the English Government in ex change for Arabi Pasha, hoping that the latter would be of assistance to the Mahdists in helping them to conquer Egypt. It is the opinion however, of our author, that this regret on the part of the Mahdi was merely pretended; for had he expressed any wish that Gordon's life should be spared, no one would have dared to disobey his orders.

IV.

Slatin Pasha had learned to speak as well as to read and write Arabic fluently while he was still in the Egyptian service and before he voluntarily became a Mohammedan. This accomplishmen brought him into intimate relations with his master at Omdurman, after he had been readmitted to the Khalifa's body guard, as he was when he was supposed to have been sufficiently punished for the letters written by him to Gor don and others during the siege of Khartum It was from the Khalifa himself that the autho obtained the account of the Mahdi's early fortunes which is given in this volume. It seems that the man Mohammed Ahmed was born near the island of Argo, in Dongola, and was of a poor and obscure family, the members of which, nevertheless claimed to be Ashraf, or descendants of the Prophet. Their claims to this dignity, how ever, were acknowledged by no one, and Mo hammed Ahmed was generally known as a Dongolawi. His tather was an ordinary fikl, or religious teacher, and had given him his early instruction in reading the Koran and in writing, and had undertaken to convey him when still a child, to Khartum; but he himself had died on the journey near Kerreri, and here his son subsequently erected a tomb to him known as the Dome of Sayed Abdullahi. Young Mohammed Ahmed now left to his own resources, went to Berber and became a pupil of the well-known Moham med el Kheir, who completed his religious education. Having arrived at manhood, he quitted Berber and went to Khartum, where he became a disciple of the highly revered Sheikh, Mo hammed Sherif, whose father and grandfather had been the principal expound ers of the Tarika, or doctrine known as the Sammania. The meaning of the words Tarika is literally "way;" hence the term "Sheikhs et Tarika" signifies" guides to the way." The duties of these holy personages consist in writing out a certain number of prayers and texts of the Prophet, which the devoteer are called upon to repeat a certain number of times, and thus facilitate the "way" to those heavenly mansions which constitute the goal of true believers. Various are the doctrines expounded by the different Sheikhs et Tarika, but each doctrine bears the name of the origina founder of an order, such as the Khatmia, th Khadria, the Sammania, &c. Mohammed Ahmed soon showed himself a zealous sup porter of the Sammania Tarika, and be came devoted to its head, Mohammed Sherif. Attended by several disciples, he went to live on the Island of Abba on the White Nile near Kawa; here they cultivated land and exed out a livelihood by the gifts received from religious persons who passed up or down the Nile Mohammed Ahmed's granduncle had resided on the island for some years, and the young zealot married his daughter. His two brothers Mohammed and Ahmed, also lived there, drove a good trade in boatbuilding, and supported the young fiki, who hollowed out for himself a cave in the mud banks, and lived in almost entir on, but occasionally paying a visit to the head of the order, to assure him of his obedience One day it feil out that the head of the order. Mohammed Sherif, had gathered together his disciples to celebrate the feast of the circumcision of his sons; he had also given out tha his guests might amuse themselves by singing and dancing as they liked. But the godly fik Mohammed Ahmed, pointed out to his friends that singing and dancing were transgression against the law of God, and that no man, be he even Sheikh et Tarika, could forgive such sins These views having reached the cars of Mohammed Sherif, he became angry at his disciple's presumption, and called on him to justify himself. Thereupon Mohammed Ahmed, in presence of all the inferior Sheikhs and

fikls, came in the most humble manner before

Mohammed Sherif and besought his forgiveness

The Sherif, bowever, abused him roundly, called

him a sedition monger and a traitor, who had

miniously struck bis name off the list of disciples of the Sammania order.

Thoroughly abashed, Mohammed Ahmed now

went to one of his relatives and asked him to

make a sheba, or piece of forked wood, to be

of obedience, and igno

broken his vow

fixed on the neck by way of punishment. With this on his neck, and with his head besprinkled from El Obeid, where the latest me with ashes, he returned for the second time in deep repentance to Mohammed Sherif, begging his forgiveness. The latter, however, utterly refused to have anything to say to him, and, in despair, Mohammed Ahmed returned to his family in Abba. Shortly afterward, Mohammed Sherif happened to be in the neighborhood, and a third time Mohammed Ahmed appeared before him in the shebs and in ashes, and again implored forgiveness. "Be off, you traitor shouted Sherif; "get away, you wretched Dongolawi, who fears not God, and opposes his master and teacher! You have verified the words of the saying. 'The Dongolawi is the devil in the skin of a man. from the religious war." By your words you try to spread disamong the people. Be off with you! I shall never forgive you!" Kneeling in silence, his head bowed low, Mohammed Ahmed listened to the scathing words. Tears streamed down his cheeks, but no longer were they tears of repentance. Resentment and rage burned within him. and his feelings were envenomed by the knowledge of his powerlessness to do anything by which to wipe out the insult. Boiling over with indignation, he returned to his home and announced to his still faithful disciples that he had been repudiated by Mohammed Sherif, and that he now intended to apply to Sheikh Koreshi, who lived near Mesallamia, to receive him into his order. This Sheikh was one of those authorized to teach the Sammania doctrines as he considered right; and, on this account, there was considerable jealousy between him and Mohammed Sherif. In due time a reply was received to the effect that Sheikh Koreishi would receive him gladly. hiohammed Ahmed and his disciples thereupon prepared to proceed to Mesallamia, and were on the point of starting when a message was received from Mohammed Sherif, inviting the fiki to appear before him and receive a full pardor and permission to resume his old function. To this Mohammed Ahmed sent back a dignified answer that he felt himself innocent of any crime and sought no forgiveness from nim; and that, moreover, he had no desire to lower his former master in the eyes of the world by bringing about a meeting between him and "a wretched Dongolawi." Sheikh Koreishi welcomed his new adherent with open arms, and the outcome of the quarrel between the godly but cunning Mohammed Ahmed and his late spiritual guide was bruited far and wide in the Sudan. That an inferior in a religious order should have refused the forgiveness of his superior was an unbeard-of proceeding, and now Mahdi), and was supposed to equal, if not sur-Mohammed Ahmed did not hesitate to proclaim pass, that of the dwellers in Paradise that he had left the Sherif because he could no It is well known that the Mahdi died of typhus longer have any respect for a master who acted contrary to the religious law. In this way he secured an immense amount of public sympathy. which brought his name prominently forward, and so added to his prestige that, even in distant Darfur, his refusal to accept forgiveness

was the principal topic of conversation. Having Sheikh Koresihi's permission to return to Abba, he there received visitors from all parts, who sought the blessing of the holy man. He received quantities of gifts, which he distributed among the poor, thus earning the epithet of "Zahed," the Renouncer. Presently he undertook a journey to Kordofan, where the towns and villages abounded with fikis, or religious teachers of the most ignorant and superstitious description. Among these Mohammed Ahmed had great success. He also wrote a pamphlet, which he distributed among his specially trusted adherents, summoning them as true believers to do all in their power to purify religion, which was debased and insulted by the corruption of the Government and the utter disregard of the officials for the tenets of It was about this time that a certain Abdul ahl, the eldest of the four sons of Mohammed

ried early.

et Taki of the Juberat division of the Taaisha section of the Baggara (cattle owning) tribe of Arabs in southwestern Darfur, presented himself to Mohammed Ahmed and sought admission into the Sammania Tarika. His request was granted, and Abdullahi swore eternal fidelity to his new master. In Abdullahi the Mahdi had at hand a useful instrument. His new adherent was able to give bim full information about the tribes of western Arabs who, being powerful and courageous, would, as he said, seize an occasion to fight for the religion of God and His prophet. To secure their good will he advised Mohammed Ahmed to make a tour through Kordofan, and, setting out, they proceeded to Dar Gimr, where Abdullahi's family forthwith became faithful supporters of the Mahdi. He told them, however, that the time had not yet come for them to leave their homes; for the present they could be more useful in stirring up their neighbors. From Dar Gimr, the strictly enjoined upon parents and guardians to Mahdi proceeded to El Obeid, the capital of Kordofan, where he visited all the principal chiefs and Sheikhs, and, by inquiring into their views and sentiments, he gradually laid the oundations for his great design. In the strictest secrecy he confided to those of whose fidelit he was assured that he had a divine mission to cleanse the religion of Mohammed, which ha

the true faith.

been polluted by corrupt officials. During this tour Mohammed Ahmed had or portunities of seeing for himself the state of the country, and he was soon convinced that a spirit of the most bitter hostility to the authorities animated the poorer inhabitants, who were taxed out of all proportion to their property, and who suffered terrible oppression at the hands of unscrupulous tax gatherers. Among the latter there were now a considerable number of Sudanese, who missed no chance of enlisting themselves and of putting their relatives in ositions of secondary importance to promote this end. The European officials were but few and, as a rule, they were liked and respected pecause the people could trust their word. Nevertheless, Slatin Posha testifies that they also must have given cause at times for dissatisfaction. With perhaps the best intentions n the world they would issue regulations entirely at variance with the manners, customs and traditions of the Sudanese. Our author is likewise of the opinion that their attitude in re gard to the slave question caused widesprand discontent. The Moslem religion permitted slavery, and from time immemorial the ground had been cultivated and the cattle tended by slaves. That slave hunting and slave driving led to the perpetration of horrible cruelties not for a moment denied; but this was a matter of very little concern to the slave buyers, who is a rule, did not ill-treat their slaves. Now the European agents of the Khedive not only had made the export of slaves from the black countries almost impossible, but had listened to the complaints of slaves against their masters

and had set them free. Mohammed Ahmed turned to account all of this seething discord. He was well aware that religion was the only possible means of uniting all the discordant elements and all the widely liversified tribes that were at continual feur with one another. He, therefore, announced himself the "Mahdi el Muntazer," the expected messenger from Allah, whose message was to supplement, and, in some measure, supersede that of the prophet Mohammed, even as the latter's had superseded that of Jesus Christ. After making this declaration, he informed his adherents that he had been inspired to undertake a hegira or flight from the island of Abba to Jebel Godin in Kordofan, and there await further divine instructions. Before quitting Abba, he further announced that, in accordance with the divine will, four Khalifas would be appointed. first of these was Abdullahi, who has since suc ceeded him; the second was All Wad Helu of the Degheim tribe (White Nile); the fourth was Mohammed esh Sherif, one of the Mahdi's rela lives, who was then only a boy; the chair of the third Khalifa was not filled for the moment, bu

We need not enumerate the successive viete les over the Egyptian officials which followed the hegira to Jebel Gebir, and which made the Mahdi consecutively master of Kordofan, o Darfur, of Bahr el Ghazal, of Khartum, and, ulimately, of all the Khedive's dominions south of Assuan. Let us rather glance at the author's

great Sheikh Es Sennusi of northern Africa

first saw at Rahad, about one day's journey Allah was officiating as Imam, or leader of pray ers. Bidding Slatin approach, the Mahdi di rected the captive to kneel on the edge of the sheepskin whereon he stood, and, taking the kneeler's hands in his, ordered the following words to be repeated: "In the name of God, the most compassionate and merciful, in the name of the unity of God, we pay to God, to His prophet, and to you our allegiance; we swear that we will not asso ciate anything else with God: that we will not steal nor commit adultery, nor lead any one into deception, nor disobey you in vour goodness we swear to renounce this world, and to look only to the world to come; that we will not flee kissed the Mahdi's hand, and was, henceforth, enrolled among his devoted adherents. The Muezzin, or prayer caller, now gave the first signal to begin prayers, and the usual formula were repeated after the Mahdi. Then all pres ent raised their hands to heaven and be sought God to grant victory to the faithful The Mahdi now began his sermon. An immense circle was formed around him, and he spoke of the vanity and nothingness of this life urging all to renounce the world and to think only of their religious duties and of the Jehad. or Holy War; he painted in most glowing terms the delights of paradise and the heavenly joys which awaited those who gave heed to his doctrines. Every now and then he would be interrupted by the shouts of some fanatic in an ecstasy, and Statin Pasha is convinced, he tells us, that every one present, with the exception of two or three prisoners, believed in him. Ou author seized the opportunity to make a careful survey of Mohammed Ahmed; he was, it seems, a tall, broad-shouldered man, of light-brown color, and powerfully built. He had a large head and sparkling black eyes; he wore a black beard, and had three slits on each cheek; his pose and mouth were well shaped, and he had the habit of always smiling, showing his white teeth and exposing the V-shaped aperture between the two front ones, which everywhere in the Sudan is considered a sign of good luck and is known as "falja." This was one of the principal causes, it appears, that made the Mahdi so popular with the fair sex, by whom he was dubbed "Abu falin," the man with the eparated teeth. He wore a short, quilted jibba (the Malidist dress, a white robe with black patches sewn upon it), beautifully clean and perfumed with sandalwood, musk, and attar f roses; this perfume was celebrated among the disciples as Ribet el Mahdi (the odor of the

lever in Omdurman not long after the fall of Khartum, and that his spiritual and temporal power devolved upon the Khalifa Abdullahi, who still rules under the name of Khalifat El Mahdi. In recounting some of the incidents which attended the succession, Slatin Pasha tries to answer the question; What had the Mahdi done, and wherein lay his power to revive a religion which had become debased What was the nature of his teaching? In the first place, he had preached renunciation; he had invelghed against earthly vanities and pleasures; he had broken down both social and official ranks; he had placed rich and poor upon a level; as a symbol of equality, he had selected for clothing a jibba, or white cloak with black patches, which became the universal dress of his adherents. Considered as a regenerator of religion, he had united the four distinct Moslem sects, to wit, the Malaki, the Shafai, the Hanafi, and the Hamball, which differ from each other in minor details, such as the method of performing ablution, the method of standing or kneeling down in prayers, and the manner of conducting marriage ceremonles; by astutely making certain much needed reforms he had succeeded in combining these four great divisions. He had made a collection of certain verses from the Koran, which he called the Rateb, and which, he enjoined should be recited by the entire congregation after morning and afternoon prayers, a cere mony which lasted at least forty minutes. He had facilitated the method of perform ing prayer ablutions, and had strictly forbidden the drinking bouts which had been invariable eccompaniments of marriage ceremonies in the Sudan; he had reduced the amount of the Mahr (the present given by the bridegroom to the bride to \$10 and two dresses for unmarried girls and to \$5 and two dresses for widows. Whoever sought for more, or gave more, was considered to have performed an act of disobedience, and was punished by deprivation ail property. A simple meal of dates and milk took the place of a costly marriage feast. By these innovations the Mahdi had sought to facilitate the ceremony of matrimony, and had see that their daughters and wards were mar-

At the same time the Mahdi had forbidden dancing and playing, which he classified as 'earthly pleasures;" and those found disobeying this order were punished by flogging and confiscation of all property. The use of bad language was punished with eighteen lashes for every improper word used, and with seven days' imprisonment. The use of intoxicating drinks such as marissa or date wine, and smoking, was strictly prohibited. Offences of this descrip tion were punishable by flogging, by eight days' imprisonment, and by confiscation of goods, thief suffered the severance of his right hand, and, should be be convicted of a second offence he lost his left foot also. As it was the general custom among the male population sudan, and especially among the nomad Arabs. to let their hair grow, the Mahdi directed that henceforth all heads should be shaved. Waliing for the dead and feasts for the dead were punishable with the loss of property. In order, meanwhile, that the strength of his army should not be decreased by desertion, owing to the severe mode of life prescribed, the Mahd practically made a cordon round the countries he had already conquered, and absolutely prohibited the passage of persons through these districts for the purpose of performing a pil-grimage to Mecca. Should any one cast the slightest doubt on the divine nature of his mission, or should there be the slightest besitation to comply ders, the delinquent, on the evidence of two witnesses, was invariably punished by the amputation of the right hand and left foot. On some occasions witnesses would be dispensed with, a revelation directly from the prophet being regarded as more efficacious in the guilt of the offender. As most of these ordinances, however, were entirely at variance with the Moslem law, Monammed Ahmed issued rigorous injunctions that the study of theology and all public commentaries thereon should cease; he ordered; moreover, that all books and manuscripts dealing with this subject should be straightway burned or thrown

into the river. Such were the teachings of the man who, from Assuan to Wadelai, and from beyond Dara in the west to the Red Sea, was recognized as the Expected Mahdi. No stone was left by him unturned to carry into complete effect the regulations which he had made. Publicly he showed himself, at all times, the strictest observer of his own teachings; but, within their houses, he, his Khalifas and their relatives wallowed in the wildest excesses, drunkenness, riotous living, and debauchery of every sort, and satisfied to the fullest extent the passions which, according to Slatin Pasha, prevail among the Sudanesc.

VIII. Now let us mark some of the things told us by

Slatin Pasha about the present ruler of the Mahdist empire, the Khalifa Abdullahi, whom the Mahdi himself, at the beginning of the religious movement, and again on his deathbed. was subsequently offered to and refused by the appointed his successor. We have said that Sayed Abdullahi Ibn Sayed Mohammed such is the full name of the Khalifa belongs to the Kanisha section of the Baggaras, as all cattleowning nomad Arabs are called. This section used to inhabit the country in the southwestern portion of Darfur, but it has recently migrated n mass to Omdurman and the neighborhood. When Abdullahi joined the Mahdi he was 35 years old, and was then a slim and active, though powerfully built man, it seems that personal impressions of the Mahdi, whom he latterly, he has become very stout, and his

lightness of galt has long since disappeared. He is now 50 years of age, but looks considerably older, and the hair of his beard is almost white. At times the expression of his face is described as one of charming amiability, but more gen erally it is one of sternness, in which tyranny and unscrupulous resolution are unmistakably visible. According to our author, he is quick tempered and rash, often acting without a mo ment's consideration, and when in this mood even his own valet dares not approach him. He is intensely suspicious of every one, the mem bers of his bousehold and his nearest relative included. Experience has taught him that loyalty and fidelity are rare qualities, and that those who have to deal with him invariably conceal their real feelings in order to gain their own ends. No one ventures to speak to him

without referring in the most fulsome terms to

his wisdom, power, justice, courage, generosity

and truthrulness. He accepts such adulatio

with the greatest satisfaction, but woe to him

who in the slightest degree offends his dignity

It appears that Abdullahi's pride and confi-

dence in his own powers are indescribable. He

firmly believes at he is capable of doing any

thing and everything. He pretends to act under

divine inspiration, and never hesitates to ap-

propriate the merits of others as his own. For example, he asserts that the Mahdlet tomb which was built with immense labor and trouble by the former Government architect, Ismail, was designed by himself, entirely in accordance with divinely inspired plans. The victories gained by his lieutenants he ascribes to the inspired orders which he pretends had been issued by him. The predominant traits of his charac ter are malice and cruelty. He delights to an noy and cause disappointment, and he is never happier than when he has brought people to complete destitution and misery by confiscating their property and by throwing them into chains It is customary with him to rob families whole sale, to seize and execute all persons of tribal influence and authority, and to reduce entire races to a condition of impotence. We are assured by Slatin Pasha that during the Mahdi's lifetime Abdullahi was solely responsible for the severity of the proceedings enacted in his master's name, and for the merciless manner in which defeated enemies were treated. It was he who gave the order for no quarter at the storming of Khartum, and it was he who subsequently authorized the sweeping massacre of women and children as well as men. After the fall of that city it was he who, for the period of four days, declared the whole Shigis tribe to be outlawed. When distributing captured women and children he was utterly regardless of their feelings. To separate children from their mothers, and to make their reunion practically impossible by scattering them among different tribes, was an amusement to him. Without the smallest provocation or pretext he has caused the death of thousands of innocent people. He had the right hand and the left foot of a certain Omar publicly cut off in the market place b cause he had falled to make lead, which he had said he could do, and for which purpose he had received a small sum of money in advance. During the horrible mutilation and execution of the Batahin Arabs, described in the book before us, the Khalifa was present, and looked with pleasure on the slaughter of his victims. His best friends and most faithful servants have no safeguard against his caprice, and their disgrace is invariably followed by the ruthless seizure of their wives and daughters. From all those who have intercourse with him he demands complete humility and submission. Persons entering his presence must stand in front of him, with their hands crossed over their breast and their eyes lowered to the ground, awaiting his permission to be seated. In his audience chamber he is himself generally seated on an angareb, or low platform, over which a palm mat is spread, a sheepskin being stretched out over it; he leans against a large roll of cotton cloth which forms a pillow. When those brought before him are allowed to be seated they take up a position as in prayers, with their eyes fixed on the ground; in this posture they answer the questions put to them, and dare not move until permission is given them to withdraw Even in the mosque, when prayers are over and he converses on general subjects, those in close proximity to him invariably maintain this attitude. He rigorously requires all persons that

the human eye. Illness and misfortune are generally caused by the evil eye." Lest the portrait should be all shadow, our

come before him to keep their eyes downcast

while he himself scrutinizes them carefully.

Some years ago a Syrian named Mohammed

Said, who had the misfortune to have only one

eye, happened to be near him when he was

delivering a religious lecture and unintention-

ally cast his blind eye in the direction of the

Khalifa. The latter at once called up Statin

Pasha and told him to tell the Syrian never to

come near the Khalifa again, and if he did

never to dare to look at him. At the same

time Abduilahl told our author that every one

should be most careful to guard himself against

the evil eye, "for," said he, "nothing can resis

author adds one touch of light. He says that the Khalifa, in spite of his tyrannical nature. shows to comparative advantage in his private life. He is devoted to his cidest son Osman, who is now 21 years of age, and who has been instructed in all the commentaries on the Koran by able Mohammedan teachers; his father, however, has never hesitated to change the teachers as often as the son wished; and, when Osman assured his father that he was sufficiently instructed, the latter at once withdrew his teach-When Osman reached his seventeenth ers. year he was married to his cousin, the daughter of his uncle, Yakub; and, on this occasion, the Khalifa departed from the strict observances regarding marriage enjoined by the Mahdi, and arranged a series of banquets extending over a period of cight days. Shortly afterward he gave his son two more of his female relatives in marriage and innumerable concubines whom he himself selected, but he declared in the most emphatic manner that he would never permit him to marry a woman from any of the Nile valley tribes. He watches over his son's interrourse with strangers with the greatest jealousy, and considers it a most dangerous proceeding. When he heard that, in the perversity of youth, his son entirely disregarded his inunctions and held nightly orgies in his house, he had a new residence built for him, close to his own, so as to exercise greater supervision. The Khalifa thinks it incumbent on a man in

his position to maintain a large establishment and, as such a course is entirely in conformity with his inclination, he has gradually become the possessor of a harem comprising over 400 women. In accordance with Mohammedan law. he was only four legal wives, who belong to free tribes; but, being a lover of change, he never hesitates to divorce them at will and take others in their places. The other women of the house hold consist, for the most part, of young girls, many of whom belong to tribes which have been forced to accept Mahdism, and whose fathers, brothers, and husbands fought against him. They are, therefore, regarded as booty and have only the rights and claims of concubines or, in some cases, of slaves. The members of this large company of ladies vary in color from a light brown to the deepest black, and represent vided into groups of from fifteen to twenty, presided over by a superior; and two or three of these groups are placed under the orders of the segroups are placed under the orders of the from the scale by the Khalifa. The favorites live in a series of large, detached houses, something like becacks, surrounded by courts encircled with high walls. Specially qualified female attenda its watch over the state of their health, and are obliged to report the facts to the Khalifa from the time. When he wishes to summon any particular lary to share his affections, he communicates his wish by means of little boy cume has the courts of the harem are carefully guarded by grown-up enunchs, and by the black body guards. The women are almost investment the formal interior cut of from intercourse with them for a short time. The value of the harem are carefully guarded by grown-up enunchs, and by the black body guards. The women are almost cut of from intercourse with the outer world. Perhaps once a year their female relative many days that the local maxim that housesy is the truth of the black body guards. The women are almost cut of from intercourse with them for a short time. The value of the courts of the harem are carefully guarded by grown-up enunchs, and by the black body guards. The women are almost cut of from intercourse with the outer world. Perhaps once a year their female relative many days to be lived to be proved to a subscribe and the provided and and contemplate to a subscribe and the local maxim that housesy is the best policy, and the outer as the local maxim that houses is a scatterial to be life to a subscribe of the provided and and contemplate of t many of whom belong to tribes which have been short time. The value of the clothing allotted to them varies with the beauty, position, and character of the wearer. It consists, for the most part, of native woven cotton cloth, with parti-colored borders or of bright silk or woollen shawls imported from Egypt. As the wearing

of silver jewelry was strictly prohibited by the Mabdi, mother of pearl buttons, and oblong stripes of red coral and onyx, threaded together, are worn around the wrists, ankles, and head. The hair is usually worn in innumerable small plaits, which are arranged in all sorts of ways, and bedaubed with a quantity of scented oil and grease. To European olfactory nerves the odor emanating from a Sudanese lady "en grande tollette" is repulsive in the extreme.

In a concluding chapter, Slatin Pasha discusses the effects of Mahdism. The extent of country now governed by the Khalifa is little altered from that occupied originally by the Egyptian Government; but with what a difference! Prosperous districts that once possessed a teeming population have been reduced to desert wastes. The great plains over which the western Arabs reamed are deserted, and their places taken by wild animals, while the homesteads of the Nile dwellers are now occupied by thos nomed tribes who have driven out the rightful owners of the soil, or enslaved them to till the land for the benefit of their new masters. Deprived of the means of self-defence, reduced by oppression and tyranny to utter hopelessness of relief from their foreign taskmaster, the comparatively small remnants of the river populations are little better than slaves. Of themselves, they can do nothing against their despotio ruler. According to the author of this book, it is folly to imagine that the country can right itself by internal revolt. The helping hand must come from without, and the local populations must be made to believe that, the first step to establish Egyptian authority having been taken, there will be no drawing back. They must be convinced that the Khalifa's power is doomed, and that the brighter era of civilization is assuredly returning. Then, and not till then, will what is left of the river tribes throw in their lot with the advancing forces, and lend their ald in breaking down the power of the now waning Mahdist empire. It must not be assumed, however, because Siatin Pasha describes this empire as declining that it is likely of itself, to become extinct at an early date. A careful perusal of his volume will make it clear that the measures taken by the Khalifa to render his position secure against internal enemies have been thoroughly effective and, so long as his authority is not threatened by external areasure, no reason is apparent why he should not, as long as he lives, maintain his ascendency. Upon his death, it is pronounced quite probable that some internal revuision will take place which might, under certain circumstances, displace the dynasty he has tried to found, but which would not necessarily bring the unfortunate country much nearer to civilizing influences than it is at present. Considered even from this point of view, the necessary palliative is still to se sought in the application of external aid.

A PEN PORTRAIT OF BISMARCE. The Bayarian Artist Lenbach Pictures

M. W. H.

The portraits of Bismarck by the famous Bavarian artist Lenbach are known the world over. They differ from all others in the studied absence of every decorative preoccupation, and so throw into a full light the moral expression of the subject. This tendency of the great Bavarian painter will astonish nobody who knows what an extraordinary observer he really is. Ir the presence of the man who poses he is like the confessor who has no need of listening to the penitent in order to penetrate the very depths of his soul. His pen portrait of his great model is a companion piece to the Bismarcks that he made in the Prussian belmet, or the slouch hat of the countryman, or bareheaded. It is:

"Bismarck now has a mild dignity which he did not possess in times gone by, and that is the only trace that one finds of his age. His senses, and especially his hearing and seeing, are excellent, and he walks as straight as a 'I.'

"I was like one of the regular inmates of his house. That might, in one sense, mean a great deal, and in another very little. I beonged precisely to the class of people that the Prince didn't care about, and before whom he was completely at his case, as, indeed, he always is. If I were a great politician, an old diplomatist, or the leader of a party, it would be quite different. Then there would be points of contact between us. A man is obliged to give Bismarck something if he wants the Prince to take an interest in him. Now, my art interested him as little as possible. He has no friends, in the common sense of the term. He takes men for what they give him; but he is cordial, kind, and affable toward everybody. In this way he remains an isolated creature with his indefatigable brain, which works constantly, like a printing press that has no more paper to print. Very comical things often happen at his

"Very comical things often happen at his table. All those who are temporarily in the house are welcome; the photographer, the insurance agent who insures the crops against hall, or the gamekeeper. Bismarck chats with an unknown man, serves him with a drink, makes him sit down beside an Ambassador that may perhaps be there at the same time, and when the man departs he asks, "Who the devil was that fellow?"

"Between the old Emperor and Bismarck there never were any intimate relations. Bismarck only obtained the favor of dispusing with the reproduction, in his official reports, of the long series of titles and dignities of the Emperor inscribed at the head of the documents. He also obtained the privilege of signing Bismarck, and nothing more. The Emperor was always courteous and kind with him, but never without a certain formality. Here is a little example of this: Bismarck was called one day to make a report at the Castle of Encelsberg. The Emperor, who was suffering from stone, was indisposed. When Bismarck came in he rose with difficulty and greeted him. When the report was finished Hismarck, considering the condition of his old master, felt like saying: I beg your Majesty not to rise, but he knew that that would be useless. He was obliged to see the old man, still in jain, rise up for the second time and accommany him to the door with a formal politeness increased from the very day that Bismarck was raised to the dignity of Prince."

The "Absurd Theatre Ticket Prices."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN-Sir: Your correspondent "Theatregoer," in Monday's Sun, only tells haif the story of managerial greed. Not satisfied with the absurd charge of \$2 a ticket, they have adopted the trick of scooping out all the desirable seats in their playhouses and giving them to their agents at the principal hotels and other prominent places, where most of them are sold at an advance of fifty cents a ticket, this extra charge on the tickets so sold being divided between the agents and the managers. The tickets not so sold are returned to the box office in time to be disposed of at the door at the usual rates. Other persons who have enything to sell are satisfied to pay an agent to effect sales. Not so the owner of the playhouse. He insists that the purchaser of his wares shall not only pay him a commis sion for permission to purchase them, but also pay his agent for his trouble in selling them office rent and other expenses in addition). The ostensible prices of the seats so sold are usually stated over the box-office window, so that the extra 25 per cent, required to obtain a good seat, of a theatre should, in his advertisement, state the location of his playbox-s, the time at which the performance continuous, and the prices of admission to each part of the house. The law should also provide that any person selling a theatre ticket at an advance on the advertised rates should be deemed guilt of a misdemeanor. All theatregores, rich and poor, would thus be put on an equal footing.

New York, Feb. 11.